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RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4024  
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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1945  
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RUEABNE/DEA HQS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 001900

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DEPT FOR INL ANDREW BUHLER, SCA/CEN BRIAN RORAFF; DUSHANBE  
FOR DEA PAUL HACKETT;

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/02/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: GOU WANTS TO REVIVE SENSITIVE INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

Classified By: Poloff Tim Buckley for reasons 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (C) Summary. Poloff met with Kamol Dusmetov, Director of the National Center of Drug Control and the Deputy Chairman of the State Commission of Drug Control (which is part of the Cabinet of Ministers). Dusmetov told poloff that the GOU would welcome the revival of collaborative efforts on the Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU), which previously benefited from International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) funds and DEA expertise. Dusmetov was surprisingly candid in explaining that, in the wake of Andijon, GOU officials were not courageous enough to convince President Karimov that it was a worthwhile program despite USG involvement. He said they "were sad to lose" the effective SIU and that the counter-narcotics struggle "should not be politicized." This is the latest in a series of signals that the GOU may be willing to reengage on law enforcement, which suits Uzbekistan's interest while avoiding other, more contentious issues. Regional DEA officer welcomed the developments but noted that DEA staff would need Uzbek visas to effectively implement a program with the SIU. End summary.

¶2. (C) On October 31 poloff met with Dusmetov to obtain updated narcotics data for the annual INCSR Report. Dusmetov took the opportunity to drop multiple hints that the GOU would like to reestablish cooperative efforts on the SIU. The SIU was established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) with INL funds for equipment and salaries as well as DEA operating expertise and funds, but it was essentially shut down after the 2005 Andijon incidents due to its USG ties. Post conducted end-use monitoring in late 2006 of substantial equipment provided to the SIU, which was still intact and accounted for. The MVD still occasionally uses the resources in its operations, although the SIU is not functioning as an effective, independent entity as it was a few years ago.

¶3. (C) Dusmetov described the SIU's previous work as highly effective in counter-narcotics operations, and said "we were very sad to lose such a department." He explained that, "when the relationship was chilled" in the aftermath of Andijon, President Karimov wanted explanations of all USG-funded programs. Unfortunately, he added, no one had the guts to stand before Karimov and describe the merits of the SIU, so the President decided to end cooperation without having a complete picture of the SIU's contributions.

Dusmetov lamented that even now "no one has the power to bring this issue back to the President", but inferred that the Embassy could offer a continuation of cooperation to support the SIU through official diplomatic channels. In particular, he recommended "the first steps should be on a high level", and that the State Commission of Drug Control would be the most appropriate starting place for this issue.

14. (C) Dusmetov restated several times during the meeting the message that Uzbekistan would welcome a revival of the SIU. He did not send his notetaker or our LES translator out of the room, and it seemed clear that he was passing a message rather than expressing personal opinions. Dusmetov agreed with poloff that there was common ground between our countries on counter-narcotics and said "this serious issue should not be politicized." Dusmetov also emphasized that cooperation "remained stable through our troubles", referring to training programs, equipment donations, and drug demand reduction efforts after Andijon.

Comment

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15. (C) It will be interesting to see if similar themes emerge during the initial meetings, November 1, of our bilateral Border Security Assistance Working Groups. The GOU seems genuinely concerned about the ripple effects of increased drug production in Afghanistan, and revival of the SIU would suit its interests without touching on issues it deems more sensitive. DEA regional officer in Dushanbe welcomed these developments but noted that it would not be practical for DEA to remotely operate with the SIU. Staffing and visa hurdles would need to be overcome to enable DEA staff to effectively

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operate a program in Uzbekistan again. Post will work with DEA and Department on a strategy to test the GOU's sincerity on reviving the SIU, which would almost certainly require a DEA in-country presence.

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